Hist.

AN EARLY NEWS-SHEET.

A.D. 1563.

[*Only* 250 *copies printed.*]

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AN EARLY NEWS-SHEET.

THE RUSSIAN INVASION OF POLAND IN 1563.

AN EXACT FACSIMILE OF A CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNT IN LATIN, PUBLISHED AT DOUAY.

TOGETHER WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND HISTORICAL NOTES, AND A FULL TRANSLATION INTO ENGLISH.

LONDON:
CHATTO AND WINDUS, PUBLISHERS.
1874.

8908
25/11/90

CHISWICK PRESS :—PRINTED BY WHITTINGHAM AND WILKINS,
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE.

INTRODUCTION.

THIS tiny volume is intereſting, amongſt other things, as being a ſpecimen of thoſe early printed news-ſheets which were the precurſors of modern journaliſm. After the invention of printing, the preſs was ſoon employed as a diſſeminator of current news. Religious diſputations were the principal topics in the early part of the ſixteenth century, and therefore we find the pamphlets of the time—for theſe were the firſt news-ſheets—moſtly occupied with the arguments and anathemas of the reformers of Northern

Europe, and the Catholics of the South. Some very early tracts, giving news of a more fecular character, have recently been found in Germany; and Señor de Gayangos, of the Efcurial in Madrid, informs me that Spain had news-fheets of a date quite as early as any which have yet been recorded by Italian and German bibliographers. To Venice is generally accredited the earlieft newfpaper. Its commercial pofition, in the early part of the fixteenth century—great, although fomewhat on the decline from its previous fplendour when a branch of the Medici family refided there—rendered the diffemination of news neceffary for the trade of the city. The fhips of Venice then covered all the feas which were counted as within the confines of the habitable globe; although fcarcely a month paffed but fome adventurous captain would ftray beyond the limits defined in his rude chart, and bring back with him to Venice the news of another land-difcovery in the far Weft or in the far South. The arrival of the fhip in the

Adriatic, the contents of its cargo, the price of commodities abroad, together with ſome account of the new iſland,[1] its wonderful people and marvellous products, would form the ſtaple of the news-ſheet of the hour. This document was in manuſcript,

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[1] The earlieſt accounts of the diſcoveries of Columbus were given in little books of a few pages, very ſimilar to thoſe quaint eight-page relations of our own Civil War, which recorded the defeat at Naſeby, the victory at Edgehill, the death of Charles outſide Whitehall, and the other great events of the hour. It is a ſingular fact that the ſubſtance of all theſe "relations," whether a barn be burnt "by accident of a ſoldier's fireing," or 5,000 men ſlain and half a town levelled to the ground, was invariably given in eight pages of ſmall quarto. In turning over a bundle of theſe "Intelligencers," it is amuſing to note that when the newſmonger was more ignorant than uſual, and could neither find words to amplify his material, nor any additional news to inſert, he generally gave the ſubſtance of the firſt page over again on the laſt, enforcing it with repeated ejaculations of "may the Lord help us," "O truſt in God, ye hypocrites," "may the ever-bleſſed God aſſiſt us all," "Amen, Amen," and ſuch like.

written in a legible hand, and copies were affixed here and there at different points of the city—the news-rooms—for the immediate perufal of thofe merchants who chofe to pay a gazzetta[1] for the reading.

In 1536 the Venetian poffeffions and factories in the Eaft were attacked by the Turks, who at this period were very powerful, and in clofe alliance with Francis the Firft of France. As may be imagined, the people of Venice were extremely anxious to hear the news from the fleet; fo the firft regular monthly journal was eftablifhed by the government to fupply this information, and men were paid to read the particulars at the principal points of the city. But the heads of the Republic were fearful of the fpread of falfe news and opinions dangerous to their pofition, fo they ordained that no fheets

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[1] An obfolete Venetian coin, equal in value to one-third of our penny.

ſhould be iſſued but ſuch as were ſanctioned by the Doge and his Council. Theſe functionaries, liberal in many things, were yet very jealous of the printing-preſs; and it was nearly fifty years after this time that the firſt printed newſpaper was publiſhed in the city under official authority. A traveller informs us that ſo recently as the beginning of the preſent century manuſcript news-ſheets were in circulation amongſt the poorer claſſes of Venice.

The origin of the now univerſal term *Gazette* is thus ſeen to have come—and very naturally—from the ſmall coin originally paid for its peruſal.

Blount, in his *Gloſſographia*, publiſhed in 1656, gives the following definitions to the word:—

> "GAZZETTA.—A certain Venetian coin, ſcarce worth one farthing; alſo, a bill of news, or ſhort relation of the occurrences of the time, printed moſt commonly at Venice, and thence diſperſed every month into moſt parts of Chriſtendom."

At this date the Venice "Gazette" had evidently become a widely-circulated journal of conſiderable

importance, prefenting its readers with news of a much more general character than the mere local affairs of the city where it was iffued. Blount's ftatement that the "Gazzetta" was read every month in moft parts of Chriftendom, receives corroboration from our own "Diurnals" and "Weekly Intelligencers" of the Civil War period. In a great many of them we find "Newes from Venice," "The *Gazzette* from Venice," "Our News Letter from Venice," &c.

M. Libri poffeffed four old news fheets:—

AVVISI di Giaverino con Narrazione del Campo Chriftiano e Turchefco, 4to. (*on the title a woodcut view*).
Fiorenza, 1594.

AVISO nuova della Prefa della Cella chiamata la Maometta in Barberia, 4to. *Roma*, 1602.

RELAZIONE della Prefa d'Agliman in Caramania, &c., 4to.
Fiorenza, 1613.

NUOVA e vera Relazione di Quanto e Succeffo tra l'Armata Maritima di Venezia e li Corfari di Barberia con la tolta Deftruzione di effi Corfari, 4to. (*woodcut on title*). *Roma*, 1638.

In reference to them this diftinguifhed bibliographer gives the following note in his catalogue :—"Four curious early News-Letters, the prototypes of the fubfequent Newfpapers or Gazettes, a name erroneoufly fuppofed to have been given to them from the commencement, which, however, was not the cafe, as they derived it from the 'Gazetta,' the fmall coin ufually paid for their perufal." With all due deference to the bibliographical knowledge of the writer, I muft here exprefs a contrary opinion. The fact of a "Gazetta" having been printed in 1570, which is preferved in the Britifh Mufeum, at once fets afide the conclufion, too quickly arrived at, that a newfpaper of 1594-1602 was not fo ftyled. Apart from this we have plenty of other proof.

An acknowledged fuccefs is invariably copied or caricatured in one way or another. Amongft the other printed trifles which appeared under the title of Gazette, foon after the Venice newfpapers were printed, we find :

La Gazette.

La *Gazette* en ces vers
Contente les cervelles,
Car de tout l'univers
Elle reçoit nouvelles.

Paris, jouxte la copie imprimée a Rouen, par Jean Petit, 1609.[1]

There were alſo :—

Gazette ſur la culbute des coyons.
A Montalban, 1617.

La Gazette françoiſe pour le temps préſent.
Troyes, 1622.

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[1] Brunet ſays of this:—"Volume peu commun, qui contient, indépendamment du programme d'une Gazette ſatirique en vers, deux autres ſatires dont voici les titres: *Les ballieurs* (balayeurs) *des ordures du monde,* et *la Caballe des matois,* plus un Diſcours *de la mode et bigarrure du monde,* et *Les joyeux et attriſtez par la Blanque.*"—(Voir ſur ce petit recueil la *Bibliothèque poétique* de Viollet-le-Duc, p. 349.)

La GAZETTE des Halles. 1649.

The title was alſo a common one for pamphlets in this country. Thus we have:—

The GAZETTE of Health. *Lond.* 1635.

The new GAZETTE, or a perfect Relation of affaires from abroad. 1638.

Maſſinger, too, uſes the word to indicate a coin of trifling value:—

> "Since you have ſaid the word I am content,
> But will not go a GAZET leſs."—
> *Maid of Honour*, III. I.

Theſe adoptions of the Venetian title only ſerve to ſhow the popularity which attended the Italian newſpaper.

It ſeems probable that the term Gazette, or "Gazzetta," was for a long time peculiar to the Venice newſpapers, and that the temporary recitals,

or news-ſheets, of other towns, merely gave a pithy title, or ſenſational heading, to attract the neceſſary attention. "Mercuries," "Advices," "Journals," "News" or "Novelties," "Relations," "Diaries," "Summaries," "News Letters," "Chronicles," with many other titles of a more fanciful character, appear to have been the earlieſt attractive headings of ancient newſpapers iſſued in this country and on the Continent.

In the famous Magliabechian Library at Florence, thirty volumes of manuſcript Gazzettas, iſſued at Venice in the ſixteenth century, are preſerved. In our own Britiſh Muſeum ſome of theſe Italian news-ſheets may be found, and the oldeſt printed one amongſt them bears, as was remarked above, the date of 1570. It will be ſeen that the little news-ſheet here reproduced in facſimile gives a date ſeven years earlier than this. The reader will pleaſe to remark the thoroughly "penny-a-line" character of the production, the want of ſufficient news to eke out the

four pages, and therefore the diſtance apart of each paragraph, the great ornament at the end, and the arrangement of dots at the beginning to aſſiſt in filling up.

J. C. H.

[Translation.]

Memorable and likewiſe Horrible Narrative of the Cruel Expedition of the Muſcovites.

Translated from the German into Latin.

THE Army of the Muſcovite, ſome weeks ago, invaded the territory of the Pole, and after ſix brave aſſaults, carried the City of Polotzki or Pleſki by ſtorm, (a town of Lithuania at a diſtance of ſeventeen miles from the deſerts,) the which they plundered, and, putting fire to it, levelled with the ground; and

from that place they ordered twenty thoufand people, firft to have their arms and legs chopped off, and then to be ftrangled, a frightful fpectacle to behold! No words can exprefs the outrages they committed upon Matrons, Maidens and Children: fixty-two thoufand and more people from that neighbourhood were lead into Mufcovia; Matrons and Maidens were ftripped naked and (when they were naked and without any garment) they were led chained into captivity. Amongft thofe that were carried off was likewife the Wayn'oda of the Lithuanian Milice, otherwife the leader of their army, with his wife, whofe life the enemy had fpared.

And this matter threw fuch an exceeding terror into the whole of this province, that Sir Nicholas Radziwit, who was accounted the firft among the Lithuanian Chieftains, quitted his eftates on his own account, leaving them either to the fafe keeping of his friends or as a prey to his enemies.

This fuccefs of their affairs ftill increafed the

valour of the barbarous and, by their cruelty, already too formidable enemy. Anon they hurried to the aſſault of the town of Kioff, ſituated in another diſtrict of Poland; the which town, becauſe it is ſituated on the river Dnieper, ſeemed moſt opportune to them for cutting off the proviſions from the whole of that diſtrict, whereby the enemy hoped, that by theſe means it would come to paſs, that all the other places in the neighbourhood, as in the former expedition, would fall into their hands, and become their property, for evermore.

For this reaſon they began by ſending before them four thouſand of the ſix thouſand Tartars which were among them, into the deſerts and wilderneſſes, who were to deſtroy every thing far and near by fire and by ſword, up to the very walls of the City; imagining, perchance, that after having viſited that whole diſtrict with ſuch a calamity, they would meet with the ſame good fortune in the ſiege of this town as they had done before.

Amongſt other things moſt dreadful to relate, the Muſcovite ſent word unto the Poliſh king, that he carried about with his army a Bier, ſuch as thoſe uſed in burying the dead, which was made of ſilver, and that he did not mean to make peace with him, until either the King's or his own head were placed on that Bier.

The army with which the Muſcovite makes this plundering expedition, amounts (if report be true) to two hundred and ſixty thouſand men and more.

May the moſt good and moſt great God preſerve us from ſuch a furious and cruel enemy, and inſtil the right wiſdom into thoſe Princes of the Holy Roman Empire, who have the government in their hands, and may He inſtil into the whole of Europe ſuch counſels as be moſt proper to revenge the enormity of this crime and to drive away thoſe peſts!

NOTES.

THE Czar at that time on the throne of Ruſſia was Ivan IV. Baſilowitch, ſurnamed "the Terrible," who was one of thoſe curſes ſent into the world, decked in imperial purple, for no other apparent reaſon but to make their ſubjects miſerable. He ſucceeded his father in 1533; the opening ten years of his reign he was a minor, and therefore could only ſhow juſt enough of his temper to awaken the darkeſt forebodings in the hearts of thoſe over whom he was one day to have an unlimited ſway. The firſt three years after he took up the reins of government, he fully realized all thoſe anticipations. But all at once a change came over him. At the age of ſeventeen the voice of religion and humanity found its way into his heart, and for thirteen years a Trajan was ſeated on the throne of Ruſſia, ſo that

army of 70,000 Poles, commanded by Kourbſky and Radzivit, invaded Ruſſia from the ſide of Poloſk, whilſt Dewlet Gheraï, Khan of the Crimea, at the head of 60,000 Tartars, penetrated into the province of Riaiſan; after an unſuccefsful ſiege of the capital of that province, the Khan retreated on receiving the news that the Ruſſians were preparing to attack him. The expedition commanded by Kourbſki and Radzivit was equally unſuccefsful, and the following year an armiſtice was concluded for three years.

Neither of the two powers had obtained any advantage, but thouſands of houſes were deſolate, and thouſands of families had a gap in them.

And the Poles then as now were a pitiful inſtance of the truth of Virgil's line:

"Quidquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi."

CHISWICK PRESS:—PRINTED BY WHITTINGHAM AND WILKINS,
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE.

MEMORABILIS.
Et perinde ſtupenda de cru
DELI MOSCOVITARVM
Expeditione narratio, è Germanico in Latinum conuerſa.

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DVACI.

Ex Typographia Iacobi Boſcardi, Typographi iurati Regiæ Maieſtatis.

MEMORABILIS ET PERINDE ſtupenda de Moſcouitarum expeditione *narratio, è Germanico in Latinum conuerſa.*

* * * * * * * * *

MOſcouitarum exercitus ſuperioribus ſeptimanis agrum Polonicũ inuaſit, & Polotzki, alias Pleſkj (Lituaniæ oppidum, quod ſedecim miliaribus à deſertis ſitum eſt) validiſsima manu, ſex incurſionibus expugnauit, diripuit, & dimiſsis ignibus ſolo equauit: eóque loci ſupra viginti hominum milia, triſti admodum ſpectaculo primum demenbrari, ac poſt ſtrangulari iuſsit. Nec vllis ſanè verbis queat exprimi, quãta in Matronas, in Virgines, in Pueros, Tyrannide graſſatus ſit. E propinquis & vicinis inde locis ſexaginta & amplius hominum milia in Moſcouiam abduxit: Matronas & Virgines veſtibus exuit, & omnes (vti nudæ, ac ſine amictu erant) vinctas in captiuitatem abſtraxit. Inter alios ve-

rò ducebatur & Lituanicæ militiæ Vvaynoda ſeu dux exercitus, cum vxore, quibus hoſtis vitam condonauerat.

QVæ res tam magnam toti illi Prouinciæ trepidationem iniecit, vt Dominus Nicolaus Radtziuit Lituaniæ Regulorum facile princeps terris ſuis ſponte exceſſerit, omnémque imperij ſui agrum, ſeu amicis ſeu hoſtibus prædæ reliquerit.

HIc rerum ſucceſſus hoſti Barbaro & nimia immanitate formidabili animos addidit. Moxque Kioff alias in Polonia ciuitatem aggredi feſtinauit. Quæ Ciuitas quia ad flumen Boriſchenē ſita & ad cōmeatum toti illi plagæ ſubtrahendum, uiſa eſt opportuniſsima, futurum ſperabat hoſtis, vt hac ratione facilè cætera omnia vicina & propinqua loca, perinde vt ſuperiore expeditione ſuæ poteſtatis ſuique mancipij faceret.

ITaque ante omnia è sex millibus Tartarorum quos secum habebat quadringenta milia in deserta & solitudines præmisit qui omnia longè lateq; vsque ad ipsam Ciuitatem flamma & ferro vastarent. Ratus fore vt postquam hac calamitate totum eum agrum afflixisset in huius ciuitatis oppugnatione pari successu & fortuna qua hactenus vteretur.

Inter alia vero relatu tristißima, Moscouita Regi Poloniæ ab se nunciari iußit, quòd ipse Capulum, quo mortui efferri solent, eumq; argenteum, cum Castris circumueheret, nec ante in gratiam cum eo redire constituisset, quàm aut ipsius Regis, aut suum proprium caput illi ferculo foret impositum.

EXercitus quo Moscouita in hac expedition populatur (si vera est fam a) est sexaginta de centorum milium, & amplius virorum.

DEus Opt. Max. hunc tam ſæuum & crudelem hoſtem à nobis auertat, Et Principibus in Sacro Romano imperio ſumma rerum tenentibus bonam mentem, totíque Europæ conſilia quæq; ad hanc ſcelerum immanitatem vindicandam & ad has peſtes propulſandas, ſalubria ſint immitat.

HRus
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Author
Title An Early News Sheet. ...1563.

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